

**AMERICAN VALUES SURVEY 2011**  
**PUBLIC RELIGION RESEARCH INSTITUTE**  
**SEPTEMBER 22 – OCTOBER 2, 2011**  
**N=1,505**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?

**[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

45	Approve
44	Disapprove
<u>12</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.2 Over the last two years do you think the economy has gotten better, gotten worse or stayed about the same? **[READ IN ORDER]**

10	Better
53	Worse
35	About the same
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.3 Thinking about some issues in the country today, do you think that **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]** is a critical issue facing the country, one among many important issues or not that important compared to other issues? What about **[INSERT; NEXT]**?

**REPEAT AS NECESSARY:** Is this a critical issue facing the country, one among many important issues or not that important compared to other issues?

a. Reducing the deficit

59	Critical issue
29	One among many
9	Not that important
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

b. Creating jobs

80	Critical issue
17	One among many
2	Not that important
*	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

c. Reducing the gap between the rich and the poor

40	Critical issue
30	One among many
27	Not that important
3	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

d. Protecting social security

66	Critical issue
28	One among many
5	Not that important
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=752]:**

ef1. Raising the minimum wage

34	Critical issue
31	One among many
32	Not that important
2	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=753]:**

ff2. Increasing government support for people in poverty

41	Critical issue
40	One among many
18	Not that important
2	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

**ASK ALL:**

REGIST These days, many people are so busy they can't find time to register to vote, or move around so often they don't get a chance to re-register. Are you NOW registered to vote in your precinct or election district or haven't you been able to register so far?

79	Yes, registered
20	No, not registered
*	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Thinking back to the 2010 election....

Q.4 In the 2010 midterm election for Congress a lot of people say that they didn't get a chance to vote. How about you... did things come up that kept you from voting, or did you happen to vote?

65	Voted
33	Did not vote (includes too young to vote)
1	Don't remember if voted (VOL.)
1	Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

**ASK ALL VOTERS (Q4=1) [N=1,092]:**

Q.5 In the race for Congress did you happen to vote for the **[INSERT AND ROTATE]** or the **[INSERT]** in your election district?

39	The Republican candidate
51	The Democratic candidate
1	Other/Third Party candidate (VOL.—SPECIFY PARTY)
0	Did not vote (VOL.)
8	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.6 As I read a pair of statements please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own views — even if neither is exactly right. **[READ; ROTATE OPTIONS]**

40	1— It is not really that big a problem if some people have more of a chance in life than others
53	2— One of the big problems in this country is that we don't give everyone an equal chance in life.
4	Neither/Both equally (VOL.)
3	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

**NO QUESTION 7**

Q.8 Now, I'd like to get your views on some issues that are being discussed in the country today. All in all, do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose [INSERT FIRST TIME; RANDOMIZE]? What about [NEXT ITEM]?

**REPEAT AS NECESSARY:** Do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose?

a. Eliminating the rights of public employees to collectively bargain over health care, pensions and other benefits

16	Strongly favor
28	Favor
26	Oppose
23	Strongly oppose
<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

b. Allowing gay and lesbian couples to marry legally

24	Strongly favor
24	Favor
20	Oppose
26	Strongly oppose
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

c. Increasing the minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$10.00 an hour

35	Strongly favor
32	Favor
19	Oppose
11	Strongly oppose
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

d. Limiting the maximum annual interest rate companies can charge on short-term or payday loans often made to low-income families<sup>1</sup>

36	Strongly favor
31	Favor
17	Oppose
11	Strongly oppose
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

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<sup>1</sup> Due to a programming error Q8d was asked of 1,409 respondents.

e. Increasing the tax rate on Americans earning more than \$1 million dollars a year

43	Strongly favor
27	Favor
16	Oppose
11	Strongly oppose
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

On another issue...

Q.9 Do you think abortion should be...

**(FORM 1 READ CATEGORIES IN ORDER, FORM 2 READ IN REVERSE ORDER)**

21	Legal in all cases
32	Legal in most cases
29	Illegal in most cases
14	Illegal in all cases
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.10 Now, as I read some statements, please tell me if you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly DISagree or completely disagree with each one. First... **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]**. Next...

**READ FOR FIRST ITEM, THEN REPEAT AS NECESSARY:** Do you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly DISagree or completely disagree?

a. It's not the government's business to try to protect people from themselves

27	Completely agree
36	Mostly agree
22	Mostly disagree
11	Completely disagree
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

b. The government interferes far too much in our everyday lives

35	Completely agree
31	Mostly agree
25	Mostly disagree
8	Completely disagree
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

c. The government should stop telling people how to live their lives

44	Completely agree
30	Mostly agree
14	Mostly disagree
10	Completely disagree
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

d. The government should do more to advance society's goals even if that means limiting the freedom and choices of individuals

6	Completely agree
14	Mostly agree
34	Mostly disagree
43	Completely disagree
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

e. Sometimes government needs to make laws that keep people from hurting themselves

23	Completely agree
44	Mostly agree
18	Mostly disagree
13	Completely disagree
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

f. Government should put limits on the choices individuals can make so they don't get in the way of what's good for society

7	Completely agree
20	Mostly agree
32	Mostly disagree
37	Completely disagree
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.11 Now I'd like your views on some political figures. As I read some names, please tell me if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of each person. The first person is **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]**. Would you say your overall opinion is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly Unfavorable, or very unfavorable? How about **[INSERT NEXT]**?

**REPEAT AS NECESSARY:** Is your opinion very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable or very unfavorable?

a. Mitt Romney

7	Very favorable
34	Mostly favorable
26	Mostly unfavorable
12	Very unfavorable
<u>22</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

b. Rick Perry

6	Very favorable
25	Mostly favorable
23	Mostly unfavorable
18	Very unfavorable
<u>28</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

c. Barack Obama

22	Very favorable
31	Mostly favorable
19	Mostly unfavorable
25	Very unfavorable
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

d. Michele Bachmann

7	Very favorable
26	Mostly favorable
22	Mostly unfavorable
21	Very unfavorable
<u>23</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=752]:**

ef1. Jon Huntsman

2	Very favorable
19	Mostly favorable
23	Mostly unfavorable
4	Very unfavorable
<u>51</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=753]:**

ff2. Ron Paul

7	Very favorable
26	Mostly favorable
27	Mostly unfavorable
13	Very unfavorable
<u>28</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

**ASK ALL:**

Q.12 Regardless of who you might support...

Which Republican candidate for President do you think has the best chance of defeating President Obama in the 2012 general election next year? [**READ; RANDOMIZE**]

19	Rick Perry
9	Michele Bachmann
5	Jon Huntsman
35	Mitt Romney
9	Ron Paul
*	Other (VOL.)
<u>24</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.13 Thinking about your vote for President, how important is it for a candidate to have strong religious beliefs. Is it very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

39	Very important
27	Somewhat important
14	Not too important
19	Not at all important
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total



**IF IMPORTANT (Q13=1,2), ASK [N=1,012]:**

Q.14 And what if that candidate had religious beliefs that were very different from your own would you be more likely to vote for them, less likely to vote for them or would it not make any difference to your vote?

6	More likely
27	Less likely
65	No difference
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

**ASK ALL:**

Q.15 Thinking about some different types of people, please tell me how comfortable you would feel with the following types of people serving as President of the United States. First... **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]**. Would you be very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, somewhat uncomfortable or very uncomfortable with **[INSERT]** serving as President? What about **[INSERT; NEXT]**?

**REPEAT AS NECESSARY:** Would you be very comfortable, somewhat comfortable, somewhat uncomfortable or very uncomfortable with **[INSERT]** serving as President?

a. A Mormon

17	Very comfortable
35	Somewhat comfortable
25	Somewhat uncomfortable
19	Very uncomfortable
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

b. An evangelical or born-again Christian

31	Very comfortable
38	Somewhat comfortable
15	Somewhat uncomfortable
13	Very uncomfortable
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

c. An atheist, that is someone who does not believe in God

14	Very comfortable
17	Somewhat comfortable
19	Somewhat uncomfortable
48	Very uncomfortable
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

d. A Muslim

11	Very comfortable
22	Somewhat comfortable
23	Somewhat uncomfortable
40	Very uncomfortable
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

**ROTATE Q16 AND Q17**

Q.16 Based on what you have read or heard about Mormons, do you think their religion is a Christian religion, or do you think it is not a Christian religion?

49	Yes, is a Christian religion
38	No, is not a Christian religion
<u>13</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.17 From what you know, do you think that Mormons have religious beliefs that are very similar, somewhat similar, somewhat different, or very different than your own religious beliefs?

5	Very similar
22	Somewhat similar
29	Somewhat different
37	Very different
<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.18 Now, as I read some statements, please tell me if you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly DISagree or completely disagree with each one. First... **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]**. Next...

**READ FOR FIRST ITEM, THEN REPEAT AS NECESSARY:** Do you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly DISagree or completely disagree?

a. We have gone too far in pushing equal rights in this country

15	Completely agree
25	Mostly agree
30	Mostly disagree
29	Completely disagree
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

b. Society as a whole has become too soft and feminine

15	Completely agree
23	Mostly agree
33	Mostly disagree
26	Completely disagree
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

c. It seems like blacks, women, gays and lesbians and other groups don't want equal rights, they want special rights just for them

19	Completely agree
24	Mostly agree
25	Mostly disagree
30	Completely disagree
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

d. Discrimination against minorities is still a very serious problem in our society

36	Completely agree
37	Mostly agree
20	Mostly disagree
7	Completely disagree
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

e. Our society would be better off if the distribution of wealth was more equal

31	Completely agree
29	Mostly agree
22	Mostly disagree
17	Completely disagree
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

f. We need to dramatically reduce inequalities between the rich and the poor, whites and people of color and men and women

33	Completely agree
30	Mostly agree
20	Mostly disagree
13	Completely disagree
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=752]:**

Q.19a In the long run, do you think the health care reform law passed last year will make health care more affordable for most Americans, will it make health care less affordable for most Americans or will it make no difference?

25	More affordable
39	Less affordable
30	Make no difference
<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=753]:**

Q.19b In the long run, do you think the health care reform law passed last year will lead to more people having health insurance, lead to fewer people having health insurance or will it make no difference?

37	More people insured
24	Fewer people insured
34	Make no difference
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

**ASK ALL:**

Q.20 Which of the following best describes how you feel about the Obama presidency so far? **[READ & RANDOMIZE]**

28	Satisfied
5	Excited
29	Disappointed
26	Worried
10	Angry
1	Other (VOL.)
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY:**

**IF DISAPPROVE OF OBAMA'S JOB PERFORMANCE (Q1=2), ASK [N=368]:**

Thinking about President Obama's job as President...

Q.21 In your own words, what is the most important reason you disapprove of Obama's job as President?

37	Economic Issues
12	<i>Big government/Spending</i>
10	<i>Jobs/Unemployment</i>
7	<i>Other economy (Bailouts, Cost of living, Prices, etc.)</i>
6	<i>Health care</i>
2	<i>Anti-business/Anti-Capitalist</i>
41	Leadership Qualities
17	<i>Broken Promises</i>
10	<i>Other leadership (Inconsistent, Ineffective, Not done enough, etc.)</i>
5	<i>Inexperienced/Unqualified</i>
5	<i>Disconnected/Out of touch</i>
2	<i>Ideological/Partisan</i>
2	<i>Broken Government</i>
11	Personal Attributes
4	<i>Dishonest/Unprincipled</i>
3	<i>Socialist/Marxist</i>
2	<i>Other personal (Religion, etc.)</i>
2	<i>Not American/Disrespecting American values</i>
9	Other (Foreign policy, Immigration, etc.)
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	Total

**ASK ALL:**

Q.22 Who do you think has better ideas about how to create jobs in the current economy?  
**[READ; RANDOMIZE]**

44	President Obama
35	Republican leaders in Congress
13	Neither (VOL.)
*	Both (VOL.)
<u>8</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

ATTEND Aside from weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services... more than once a week, once a week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, seldom, or never?

13	More than once a week
22	Once a week
14	Once or twice a month
21	A few times a year
16	Seldom
13	Never
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.23 How important is religion in your life – the most important thing, very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

19	The most important thing
37	Very important
24	Somewhat important
10	Not too important
10	Not at all important
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.24 Which comes closest to your view? **[READ, IN ORDER]**  
**[Holy book: If Christian or no religion (RELIG=1-4, 9, 10, 12, 13 OR CHR=1) insert "the Bible"; If Jewish (RELIG=5), insert "the Torah"; If Muslim (RELIG=6), insert, "the Koran"; If other non-Christian affiliations (RELIG=7,8,14 OR (RELIG=11 AND CHR=2,9)), insert "the Holy Scripture"; IF DK/REF IN RELIGION (RELIG=99) AND CHR=2,9, insert "the Bible"]**

**IF BELIEVE HOLY BOOK IS WORD OF GOD (Q.24=1), ASK:**

Q.25 And would you say that **[READ, IN ORDER]**?

67 **[Holy book]** is the word of God, OR  
49 **[Holy book]** is to be taken literally, word for word, OR  
46 Not everything in **[Holy book]** should be taken literally, word for word  
1 Other (VOL.)  
4 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)  
27 **[Holy book]** is a book written by men and is not the word of God  
1 Other (VOL.)  
4 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)  
100 Total

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=752]:**

Q.26 Now I'm going to read you three things that sometimes bother or worry people. After I read all three items, please just tell me HOW MANY of them would bother you. Do not tell me which ones, just how many. **[READ; RANDOMZE STATEMENTES]** How many, if any, of these things bother or worry you?

- 1—A family member marrying a born-again Christian
- 2—An atheist teaching elementary school in your community
- 3—A Mosque being built near your home

1.03 Mean number of selected statements

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=753]:**

Q.27 Now I'm going to read you four things that sometimes bother or worry people. After I read all four items, please just tell me HOW MANY of them would bother you. Do not tell me which ones, just how many. **[READ; RANDOMZE STATEMENTS]**. How many, if any, of these things bother or worry you?

- 1—A family member marrying a born-again Christian
- 2—An atheist teaching elementary school in your community
- 3—A Mosque being built near your home
- 4—A Mormon becoming President of the United States

1.40 Mean number of selected statements

**ASK ALL:**

**MEDIA** Which of the following television news sources do you trust the MOST to provide accurate information about politics and current events? **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

22	Broadcast network news, such as NBC, ABC or CBS
22	CNN
24	Fox News
6	MSNBC
5	Comedy Central's Daily Show with Jon Stewart
12	Public television
2	Other (VOL)
4	Do not watch television news (VOL.)
3	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

*Note: Numbers may not add to 100% due to rounding*



# Survey Methodology

The survey was designed and conducted by Public Religion Research Institute and funded by the Ford Foundation with additional support from the Nathan Cummings Foundation. Results of the survey were based on bilingual (Spanish and English) telephone interviews conducted between September 22, 2011 and October 2, 2011, by professional interviewers under the supervision of Directions in Research. Interviews were conducted by telephone among a random sample of 1,505 adults 18 years of age or older in the continental United States (602 respondents were interviewed on a cell phone). The landline and cell phone samples were provided by Survey Sampling International and the final sample was weighted to ensure proper representativeness.

The weighting was accomplished in two stages. The first stage of weighting corrected for different probabilities of selection associated with the number of adults in each household and each respondent's telephone usage patterns.<sup>2</sup> In the second stage, sample demographics were balanced by form to match target population parameters for gender, age, education, race and Hispanic ethnicity, region (U.S. Census definitions), population density and telephone usage. The population density parameter was derived from Census 2000 data. The telephone usage parameter came from an analysis of the July-December 2010 National Health Interview Survey. All other weighting parameters were derived from an analysis of the Census Bureau's 2010 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

The sample weighting was accomplished using Sample Balancing, a special iterative sample-weighting program that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target populations.

The margin of error is +/- 2.5% for the general sample at the 95% confidence interval. In addition to sampling error, surveys may also be subject to error or bias due to question wording, context, and order effects.

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<sup>2</sup> Telephone usage refers to whether respondents have only a landline telephone, only a cell phone or both types.

**RELIGION & POLITICS TRACKING SURVEY**  
**OCTOBER 19 - 23, 2011**  
**N = 1,019**

Q.1 I'd like your views on a few of the Republican candidates for President. As I read each name, please tell me if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of each person. The first person is **[INSERT; RANDOMIZE]**. Would you say your overall opinion is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? How about **[INSERT NEXT]**?

a. Mitt Romney

9	Very favorable
28	Mostly favorable
25	Mostly unfavorable
18	Very unfavorable
<u>20</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

b. Rick Perry

6	Very favorable
20	Mostly favorable
27	Mostly unfavorable
25	Very unfavorable
<u>22</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

c. Herman Cain

11	Very favorable
24	Mostly favorable
22	Mostly unfavorable
17	Very unfavorable
<u>26</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

### ROTATE Q2 AND Q3

Q.2 From what you know, which Republican candidate for president has RELIGIOUS BELIEFS closest to your own? **[READ; RANDOMIZE]**

12	Herman Cain
7	Mitt Romney
11	Rick Perry
9	Ron Paul
1	Other (VOL.)
20	None (VOL.)
<u>41</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.3 From what you know, which Republican candidate for president has POLITICAL VIEWS closest to your own? **[READ; RANDOMIZE]**

17	Herman Cain
20	Mitt Romney
10	Rick Perry
12	Ron Paul
1	Other (VOL.)
19	None (VOL.)
<u>22</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

Q.4 Do you happen to know what Mitt Romney's religion is? Is he Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Mormon, Muslim, something else, or is he not religious?

3	Protestant
3	Catholic
*	Jewish
42	Mormon
*	Muslim
2	Something else
2	Not religious
2	Never heard of him/her (VOL.)
45	Don't know what his religious beliefs are (VOL.)
<u>1</u>	Refused (VOL.)
100	Total

*Note: Numbers may not add to 100% due to rounding*

# Survey Methodology

The survey was designed and conducted by Public Religion Research Institute. Results of the survey were based on bilingual (Spanish and English) telephone interviews conducted between October 19, 2011 and October 23, 2011 by professional interviewers under the direction of Social Science Research Solutions (SSRS). Interviews were conducted among a random sample of 1,019 adults 18 years of age or older in the continental United States (294 respondents were interviewed on a cell phone).

The final sample was weighted to six different parameters—age, race, sex, geographic region, education and telephone usage<sup>3</sup>—to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total adult population.

The margin of error for the survey is +/- 3.0 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. In addition to sampling error, surveys may also be subject to error or bias due to question wording, context and order effects.

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<sup>3</sup> Telephone usage refers to whether respondents have only a landline telephone, only a cell phone or both types and the frequency with which they use each type.